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503.30414C14 CO 3-G

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): KATO, et al.

Serial No.: 09/461,432

Filed: December 16, 1999

For: VACUUM PROCESSING APPARATUS AND OPERATING
METHOD THEREFOR

Group:

Examiner:

SUPPLEMENTAL PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT AND
REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW PRIOR TO FIRST OFFICE ACTION

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

February 10, 2000

Sir:

Please amend the above-identified application, prior to
examination thereof, as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims presently in the application as
follows:

Sub (a) 3. (Amended) A method of transferring cassettes in
operating a vacuum processing apparatus having plural vacuum
processing chambers, the vacuum processing apparatus
including:

an atmospheric loader, exposed to the air;
a vacuum loader; and
a lock chamber for connecting said atmospheric
loader and said vacuum loader, wherein
said atmospheric loader includes a cassette mount